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Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 197 (2015) 1952 – 1956

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Social and Behavioral Sciences

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7th World Conference on Educational Sciences, (WCES-2015), 05-07 February 2015, Novotel  
Athens Convention Center, Athens, Greece

## Factors influencing the quality of teaching and the foreign language knowledge

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### Abstract

At present the quality of foreign language teaching is supposed to be influenced not only by teacher's language and method knowledge, but also by grasping modern trends helping to proper practical changes. The factors influencing success or failure may be various with each student. The influence might be exerted by different conditions, as different sequence or single events in student's life, family events, school events within the gang of schoolmates, and of course his actual state of preparation.

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Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Education and Research Center.

**Keywords:** Foreign language teaching; language knowledge; factors influencing quality of teaching.

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### 1. Introduction

Researches concerning the quality of teaching and carried on in the pedagogical field in earlier time had mentioned the quality of education almost exclusively in connection with its contents, school aids and methods used. Later, when the experts had evaluated teacher's work, an amount of material learnt started to be thought of as quality indication.

The Dictionary of Pedagogy does not give the concept of teaching quality. It only defines the concept of the teaching process quality and it reads as „complex characteristics of teaching parameters (properties).“ (Prucha, Walterova, Mares, 2009). At present the quality of foreign language teaching is supposed to be influenced not only by teacher's language and method knowledge, but also by grasping modern trends helping to proper practical changes.

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Foreign language teaching proceeds with its proven technologies, strategies and activities. Simultaneously those devices are successfully combined with some elements of older methods which are believed to be an asset. The teaching process has been enriched by most modern technical tools and it has been made more attractive in this way. The current foreign language teaching distinguishes itself by modern activating approaches, by group work of students among them. This form of teaching enhances their chance of their communication skill. Also various simulating activities belong among them making possible to develop language skills, reinforce social links between students and their social and working competencies and their learning competencies as well. The factors influencing success or failure may be various with each student. The influence might be exerted by different conditions, as different sequence or single events in student's life, family events, school events within the gang of schoolmates, and of course his actual state of preparation. Another influence can be exerted by unsatisfactory development, maturity needed for grasping and mastering of certain material. A very important role is played by student's individual properties. Those are defined by a lot of studies. We can summarize and mention the factors as follows: age, ability, talent, personality, emotions, motivation and intelligence (Janikova, 2011). The important factor influencing the quality and effectiveness very distinctly is a high-quality education and a suitably selected textbook. Additional factors are: modern teaching methods, technical equipment and environment which the teaching process happens in. Other additional factors are also mentioned with university students. Such properties are: emotional maturity and stability, drive for success, student's cognitive style, his conformity and independence.

The pedagogical dictionary mentioned gives some variants of school failure conception:

1. Traditional pedagogy and some laypersons of the public grasp a study failure as under average or even unsatisfactory results stated by school evaluation of education student knowledge (so called bad grades).
2. The school failure has been explained in broader connection from the pedagogical-psychological and socio-pedagogical point of view. It is through as a child's or adolescent's lapse in conditions of school environment. It happens so not only through bad results but also through the making of negative psychical attitudes and emotional states with in the links with learning proper, with education in general, with teachers etc. (Prucha, Walterova, Mares 2009).

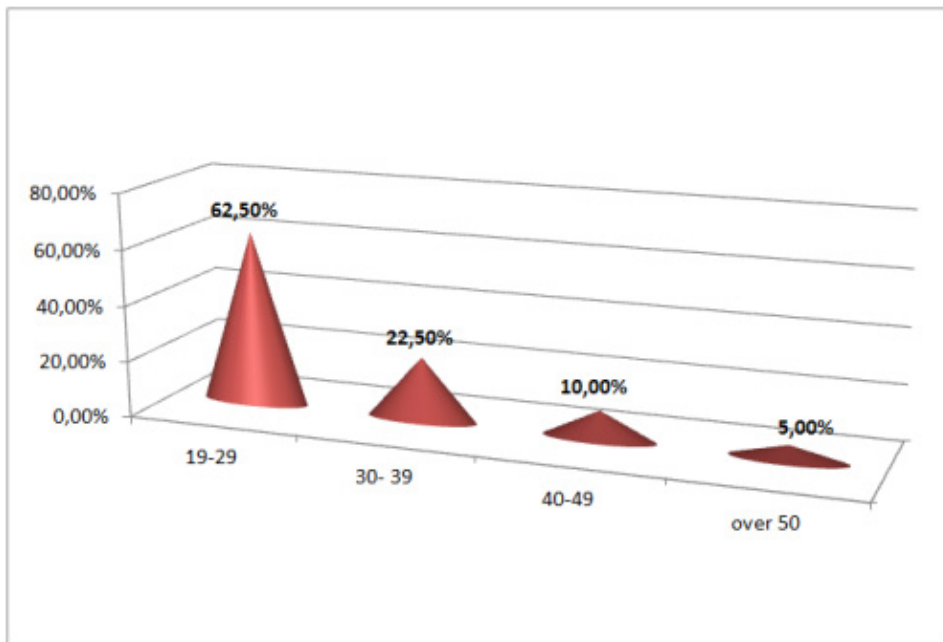
When speaking about foreign language teaching quality it is introduced very often, that a basis of any success is a good teacher. The language lecturer's responsibility should be the selection of interesting exercises, presentation of material learnt and first of all moving students toward teachers-directed discussions or drill exercises. Those exercises teach the material learnt, the learners memorize it for its automatic usage. A good teacher has to motivate students to their positive and active approach to learning.

The evaluation of teaching and teacher quality by students has in western countries its long-term tradition. Intensive research work in that field has proceeded over the last forty years. In our country, the first research started as long ago as the end of 70s. Some more detailed studies were published in the second half of 80s.

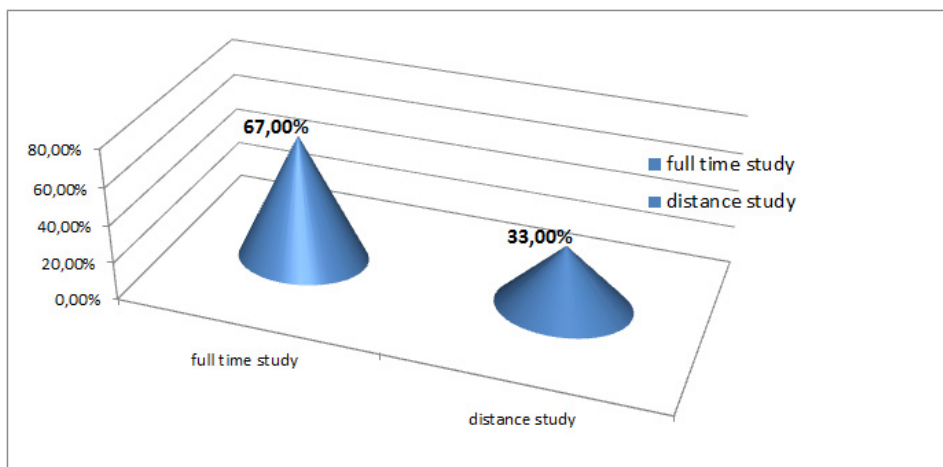
Basically, the evaluation of teaching may happen in a summative or formative way. In the first case, the evaluation is summarizing, end-of-term or end-of-study, and certificating. Its purpose is to classify teachers, departments, courses, subjects into a small member of categories (of a good quality - of a poor quality, valid – unvalid, excellent – average – poor). A formative evaluation is partial, diagnostic and proceeding. Its goal is to give the teacher, department, course organized or garants of a subject a feedback, on teaching quality, to show possible deficiencies and faults and make possible to correct them.

## **2. Student's view of teaching quality and of factors influencing that quality**

Within the reference frame of teaching German, we have carried out a small research into student's view of teaching quality and of factors influencing that quality. The survey was done using a questionnaire. The answering participants were 120 students from various study years and study forms. Proportional representation of students according the age and study form is shown in two graphs.

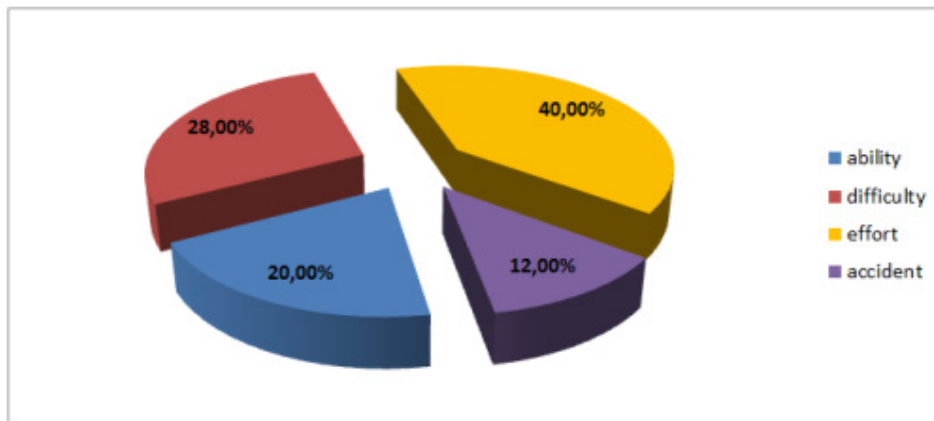


Graph1 : Respondents according the age.



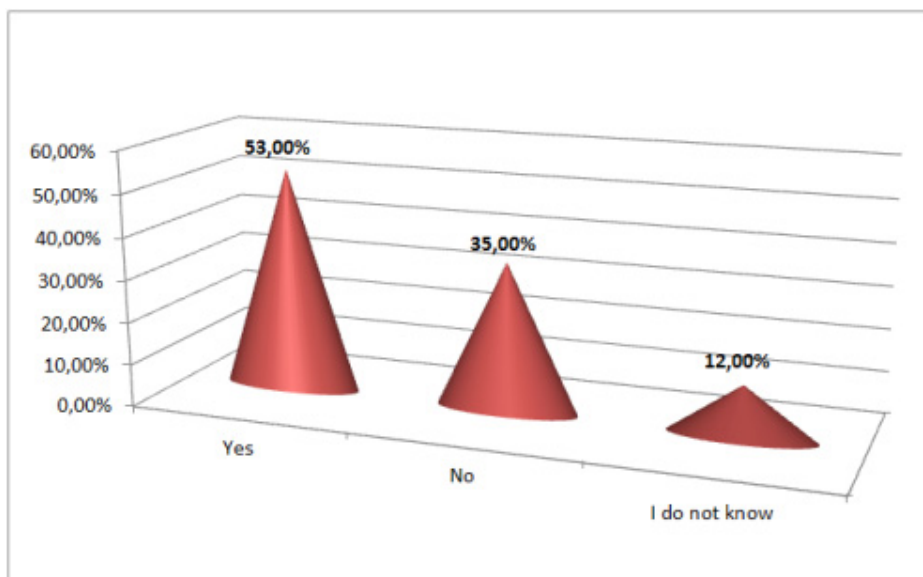
Graph 2. Respondents according to study form

We investigated students' views on school success. Students gave a study effort on the first place, the difficulty of material studied on the second, and a bit surprisingly, the study abilities on the third place.



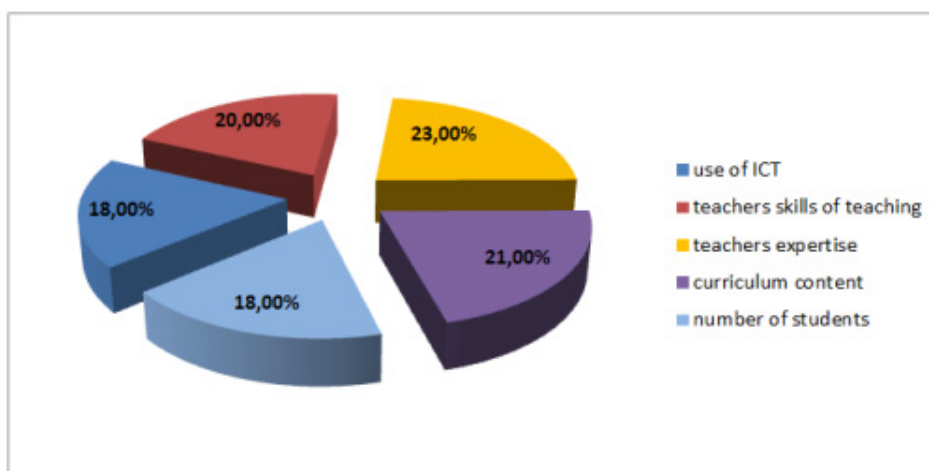
Graph 3. What influences a study success?

The next question was: Is your study success increasing parallel with study process? In this case, more than one third of students introduce that with years proceeding the study success does not increase, but 53% of students give their results as getting better. 12% respondents „do not know“.



Graph 4 Is your study success increasing parallel with study process?

We take for important the facts influencing the quality of teaching.



Graph 5. What is influencing the quality of teaching?

The differences given are very spare. Students give teacher's professional knowledge on the first place, next is the contents of material learnt and teacher's pedagogical abilities. The same scale level has the ICT use during the teaching process and the number of students per a study group.

### 3. Conclusion

Making judgments about the factors mostly influencing foreign language teaching the students put on the first place their efforts devoted to their study. In most cases they are convicted their success has got increasing tendency. As far the quality of teaching, the students appreciate the lector's professional competence and his pedagogic skills most highly.

We see student's evaluation of university teaching as a resource of information about the real teaching process in this school environment. We do not think as primary not so much as the checking function of that evaluation as its diagnostic or auto diagnostic function (the sight of teacher's work from the other side). A range of tools measuring the quality of university teaching has been developed. They make possible to measure the quality of teaching mentioned on the basis of students' views.

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